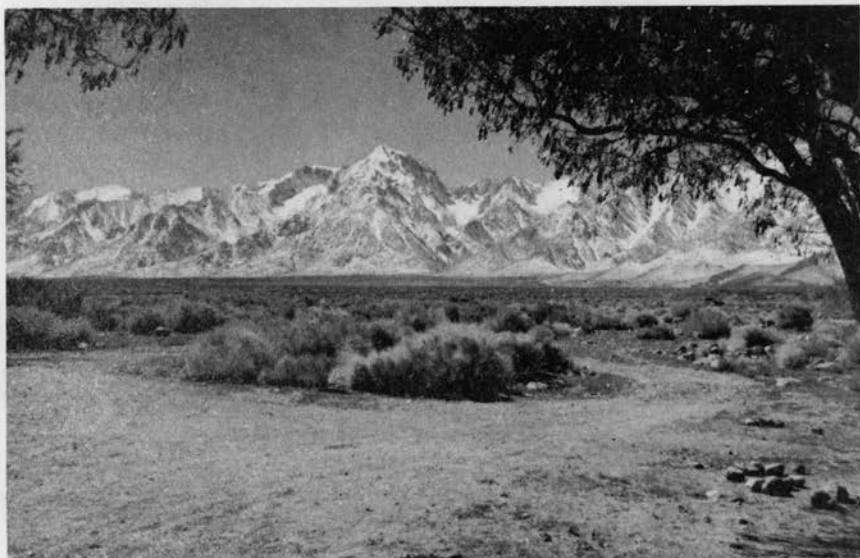


RAYMOND
P O BOX 507
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93526

SOUVENIR BOOKLET OF INDEPENDENCE

FOURTH OF JULY, 1963



MT. WILLIAMSON, ELEVATION 14,384 FEET

INDEPENDENCE HERITAGE

MT. WILLIAMSON

The eastern side of the Sierra Nevada is one of the most imposing mountain escarpments in the world. The most conspicuous peak seen from Owens Valley is Mt. Williamson. It stands out more than a mile east of the main divide. Its rugged form and position give it an imposing appearance. Its great rock wall on the north side often catches the rays of the evening sun, setting it ablaze with color long after all other points are in shadow.

This mountain was named in 1864 by Clarence King for Robert S. Williamson of the Pacific Railroad Survey made in 1853-1854.

INDEPENDENCE

Independence lies "in a hill dimple at the foot of Kearsarge", a peak great in history. The town has a heritage to match its mountains.

It started as a settlement in August of 1861 when Charles Putnam, seeing the flow of settlers on the short-cut from Salt Lake, built a trading post, and thus started the settlement of Independence.

The name "Independence" is one honored and revered. It came to us from that greatest of all Days, the day we became a Free Nation, Independence Day, July 4, 1776. Camp Independence was established July 4, 1862, and the little town of "Putnam's" took the name Independence when the County was formed in 1866, and became the County Seat.

KEARSARGE PEAK



A rich strike was made on the side of Kearsarge Peak in 1864, and the mine which was developed was named "The Kearsarge". Assays indicated both gold and silver running high, and a huge mill was built far up on the side of this mountain. The rugged country and the demonetization of silver finally closed the mine and mill, but who knows what awaits the enterprising miner who looks beneath the foundation of this beautiful mountain?

Today Kearsarge looks down upon the modern Mt. Whitney Fish Hatchery, one of the finest in California, and upon the dashing streams where millions of fish are planted yearly for the enjoyment of the many fisherman.

(Below) Johnny Symmes
a full-blood Paiute
Indian, born and grew
up near Independence,
was a Marshal in the
Parade, July 4, 1962.



(Above) A. P. Mairs
known to his friends
as "Pete", was born
and reared in
Independence. He
was one of the two
Marshals in the
Parade, July 4, 1962.



Thomas Edwards came to the Owens River Valley in 1863, bought the Putnam property and built a home on this land. He laid out a town site eight blocks long and six blocks wide, naming the streets and alleys as this part of Independence is today. His patent was the first filed in the new County.



This little white house, still standing, was the home built by Thomas Edwards in 1863. It stands on part of the land held by Charles Putnam the first real settler in the area east of the Sierra Nevada. The large tree at the front is likely the oldest tree in the County (This is a Locust Tree and was brought in by the Edwards).



This is Independence ninety years ago this year. Note the Court House "cupola" just showing over the top of Harris and Rhine Store. A small structure stood on the site of the present jail just north across the street from Harris and Rhine. This was the Rothchild Store later to move to the site of the Austin TV Store. The Miners' Hotel was in the right foreground. The large building, center left, was the Norman House. Note stream flowing across street. This scene was taken from about where the Legion Hall now stands, looking north. Today, Independence is a nice modern town, yet with much of the old flavor. It has a beautiful Classic Court House, one of the finest in California.

SOME IMPORTANT FACTS ABOUT INDEPENDENCE

The site of the first business in Owens River Valley,
Putnam's Trading Post.

Had the first Post Office in Inyo County, 1866. The
first one east of the Sierra Nevada was
established at San Carlos while the area
was still in Tulare County, June 1, 1864.
It was transferred to Independence,
February 27, 1866.

The first newspaper was published in Independence,
July 1870.

The first mining district east of the Sierra
Nevada was established in the mountains
to the east and extending down into the
valley, known as the "Russ Mining District",
and formed in 1860.

The first road into the mountains was the Onion
Valley Road, built on an old Indian trail
made long before the time of white man.

Had the first school in Owens River Valley.

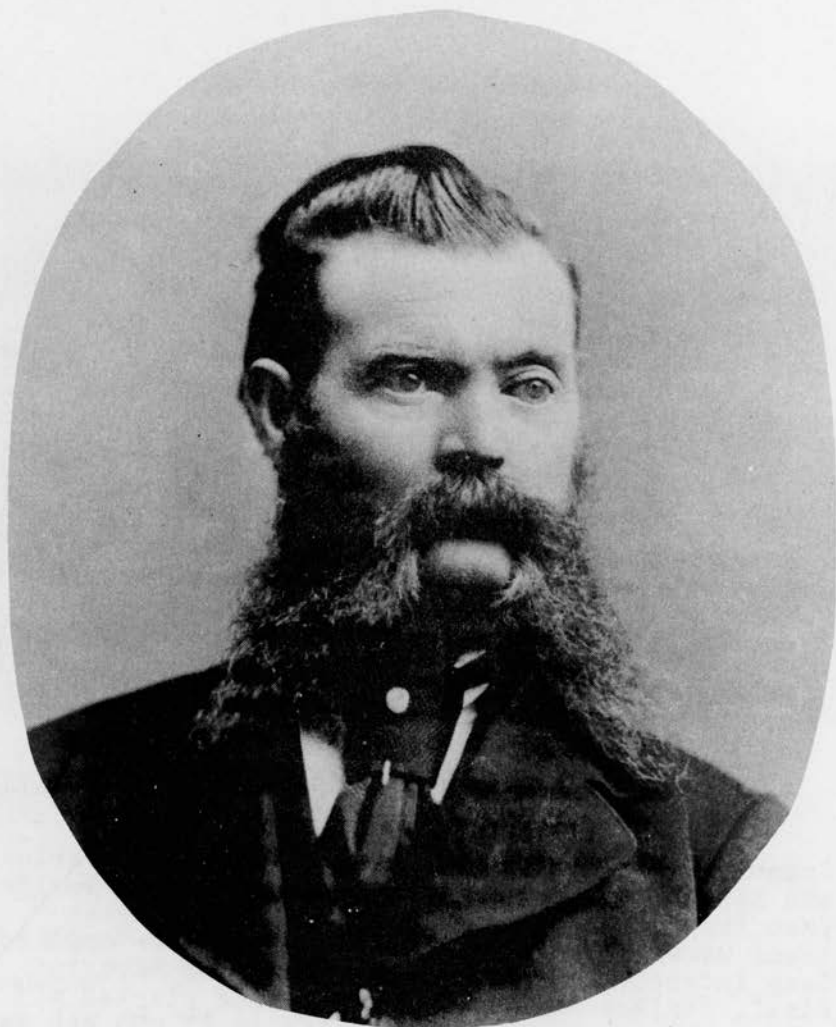
The first telegraph line in Inyo County, from
Independence to Camp Independence.

SAN CARLOS AND BEND CITY



Crumbling foundations mark the sites of San Carlos and Bend City, "rip-roaring towns", founded in 1863 when the area belonged to Tulare County. These towns were on the east side of Owens River opposite Camp Independence and the settlement of "Little Pine". Strikes made in August of 1862 started a gold rush, assays running as high as \$7,000 per ton. The towns grew rapidly and by January 1864 had many stores and saloons. The two towns three miles apart were rivals, but it was predicted that within a year there would be one large town, surpassing Visalia. When the towns were abandoned a few years later the houses were moved to Independence.

T.F.A. CONNELLY ONE OF THE FOUNDERS OF BEND CITY



An original member of both the "George" and the "Darwin French" parties, he came to the area in 1860, and helped to form the "Russ Mining District" April 20, 1860, the first in the area east of the Sierra Nevada. It was in this District that the new towns were established.

THE COMMANDER' HOUSE



This house was built at the military post, Camp Independence, in 1872, following the earthquake of March 26th of that year which greatly damaged the walls of the original adobe fort. Major Harry C. Egbert, Company B, 12th U.S. Infantry, was Commander at the time of the earthquake, and it was he who succeeded in getting the Government to rebuild the Fort, and thus was the first to live in this house. The Camp was abandoned in 1877 but the buildings stood on the grounds until 1883 when this house was sold to V. G. Thompson and moved to its present site. It is now being restored by the Eastern California Museum Association.

INYO PIONEER MONUMENT



This Monument stands at the front of the Inyo County Court House Yard, representative of the spirit and courage of the Pioneers.

The sculpture work for this monument was done by Mrs. Cyria Henderson of Palm Desert, and the spirit expressed by the figures crossing the plaque is symbolic of the mountains in the background.

This is the Independence Heritage.

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THE INDEPENDENCE DAY CENTRAL COMMITTEE, made up of representatives from various organizations and interests in the town of Independence has been responsible for this Booklet. This Committee wishes to thank the Sponsors and all who have been helpful in producing this Souvenir Booklet.

THE INDEPENDENCE DAY CENTRAL COMMITTEE was formed for the purpose of keeping alive the traditional celebration of the Fourth of July which was so much a part of the early history of Independence.

The price of this booklet is 25 cents.